

ESOTERISM OF *THE OUR FATHER*¹

The “Our Father” has always been considered as one of the most esoteric of Christian prayers. According to tradition, the Christ would, at the moment of sacrifice, have addressed this marvelous invocation to his celestial Father and all occultists have the spiritual gift of Eliphas Levi’s work on the occult verse of the “Our Father”.

Whatever the true origin of this prayer, it is easy to discover the high initiatic essence contained therein through analysis, even hasty. In the following few pages we are going to present a preliminary summary of our research on this subject to our readers. We do not doubt that better prepared souls than ours on this subject, would be able to develop further a study whose surface we will only skim.

In the “Our Father” we need to consider:

1. The Prayer itself;
2. The divisions it contains and their purpose;
3. Variations of this prayer following the principles of Analogy.

THE PRAYER

The “Our Father” is composed of two parts:

1. An exoteric part, the only part known to the generality of Western Catholics;
2. An esoteric part, known to the Churches of the East and whose enunciation is reserved to priests.

The exoteric part includes the Revelation of powers which act in the three worlds and an analysis of their means of action.

The esoteric part links these powers to their origin through the revelation of the mysteries of the Great Arcana. It is the synthesis of teachings whose outline is contained in the first part.

As a reminder let us give the French text of these two parts.

EXOTERIC PART

Our Father who is in Heaven,
Hallowed by Thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come

¹ Reproduction of a brochure published in 1895 and which has become very rare.

Thy Will be done – *on Earth as in Heaven*².

Give us this day our daily Bread,
Forgive us our trespasses
*As we forgive those who have trespassed against us*³.

Keep us from Temptation,
And Deliver us from Evil.

ESOTERIC PART

For Thou art,
Royalty and Order and Power in action through the Æons (generative cycles).

Such is the text of the Prayer, whose divisions we have moreover already indicated and to which we shall shortly return.

For the moment let it suffice for us to prove that the words used are very general.

Father, Name, Kingdom, Will, Earth, Heaven.
Bread, Forgiveness, Debts (or offenses), Temptation.
Trespass.

This tells us, right now, that we are dealing with *Laws* – that is to say, according to the method, which was so dear to our ancestors, each of these words is an *analogical key* allowing the application of the law expressed to a whole series of realities. It is to an experiment with some of these adaptations that we will devote the next part of this paper. For now let us return to the major divisions we need to establish in the Verses.

² I am trying to translate the French version exactly, so the words will not be identical to their English equivalent - PV.

³ Let us recall the Latin text of this verse: *Dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*. This should be translated exactly as: *Give us our due as we give those who must give us their due in this regard*.

DIVISION OF VERSES

We know that occultism, with no distinction of dates or schools, teaches the existence of three worlds:

1. The divine world;
2. The moral⁴ or astral world;
3. The physical world.

Mr. Amelineau, in his knowledgeable work on Egyptian gnosis, stresses the fact that *all the gnostic schools* agree on the existence of three worlds. It is the same for all the schools of Kabbalah, alchemy or theurgy.

Now, the first three verses correspond to the divine world characterized by three terms.

Father, Name, Kingdom is synthesized by the term Will.

Earth, Heaven serves at the place between the two worlds.

Bread, Forgive, Offense corresponds to the world of human Will.

Finally, *Temptation* and *Trespass* correspond to flesh and the physical world.

DIVINE WORLD

God is analyzed under His triple manifestation:

The Father (*Our Father*), considered to exist in *all the heavens*, that is to say on all the planes where our Ideal can reveal itself, be it physical, astral or divine.

This Father manifests Himself through two other aspects, the Word (*Thy Name*) whose true knowledge must be reserved to initiates so as not to profane it (be hallowed);

The Holy Ghost (*Thy Kingdom*), the living realization of Divinity in all its incarnations and which initiates everywhere call the universal advent (...*come*).

Finally, the Divine Unity appears in this mysterious invo-evolution of Will (*Thy Will*) whose current of love runs through all creation from Matter (*Earth*) in all its planes up to the Spirit, the Ideal (*Heaven*) in all its hierarchies.

It is this mysterious current (evoked by Hermes at the beginning of his *Emerald Tablet*) which links the divine world to the human world, which we are now going to enter on.

⁴ As used in his paper the word 'moral' can be substituted by 'mental' or 'intellectual' – PV.

HUMAN WORLD

At every instant of our life, the current of divine love penetrates us and brings us the spiritual *Bread* whose salutary influence we must assimilate daily. But, most often, we close our soul to this divine influx which, like the Sun lighting the Earth, can nevertheless not penetrate the depths of the cave that we excavate for ourselves by driving ourselves down into Matter instead of evolving towards the Spirit.

So what is the means to open our being to the daily Bread of spirituality?

The following Verse will teach us.

Each offense made against our divine Immortality is a *debt* which we freely contract against ourselves, and which we will have to discharge through suffering in the next incarnation. As Pythagoras taught, we ceaselessly generate our future through the use we make of the Present. Now, there is a way to quickly open the door of our interior heaven, and that is to sacrifice a little of our *egoism* in favor of a little of our *universality*. Our *egotistic* life is *in us*, but our *moral* life is *in others*. It is only in acting for the benefit of others that we will act in an evolutionary manner; while in acting for our own profit, we will act in an involutionary or darkening manner.

If someone injures me, he contracts a moral debts towards me whose payment I am at liberty to delay at will. Through his action he becomes, as it were, my slave. If I keep my hatred of his act and if I think of vengeance, then I become *egotistic*, and I voluntarily generate the evil which will kill me spiritually. But if I *forgive*, then I universalize myself, and act in a divine manner, and I destroy not only the evil which I was going to do to myself, but also the evil which my enemy had done to himself; I progress, according to my means, the evolution of the whole of humanity through making *attractive* two souls which would have remained *repulsive* to each other, perhaps for centuries, and which would have delayed the final reintegration.

Free forgiveness is thus the most wonderful means of appealing to Providence which could have been revealed to us.

Form this we see the importance of this word from the point of view of the conscious creation, by man, of his Immortality.

PHYSICAL WORLD

This creation, Sin, that is to say of evil towards ourselves, is in fact the key to our incarnation in the world of Flesh, in this world of *Physical Temptation*. It is Spiritual Adam who, through his desire to unite with Matter in the hope of becoming *stronger* than God, created in his molecules – that is to say, in us – Temptation towards the world below. Our present time is seriously ill due to error coming from the same source⁵.

Between two powers, the naked and apparently powerless *Idea*, and *Money* which is so powerful in appearance as a universal lever, that the profane gravitate towards money, and do not stop to realize that this power is only illusory, and that a pile of gold diminishes in the proportion that one wishes to spread its influence across a larger number of beings. On the other hand, the Idea is multiplied by the number of beings which incarnate it, and grows with time. Between Spirit, the subtle ideal, and Matter, or instant manifestation, Adam chose the latter; and from this arose the Evil, the Sin, the Incarnation that each of the Adamic molecules – that is to say each human being – must *kill* within himself by calling for Union with the Idea-Providence through the progressive Sacrifice of Matter-Fate.

The key to all this evolution, to this potential union of God and Man, is contained within a single principle: *Forgiveness*.

One can end the “Our Father” here if one only possesses the first two degrees of initiation; but “pneumatics” will go further and evoke the great mystery of the divine constitution.

We shall raise the veil so far as it is possible to do so without danger, through the following parallel:

For Thou art,

Royalty.....Father Principle.

Order.....Son Principle.

Power.....Spirit Principle.

⁵ I would guess Papus is speaking of the atheism and secularization prevalent in Masonry and government in general in France at the time of his writing – PV.

In

The Æons

Creative Principles of Heaven, Man and Earth, that is to say, the Three Worlds. Manifestations of the Divine Will. (The Æons correspond to the Elohim of Moses).

Let us summarize all that we have determined up till now in a final table, and we will then return in the next section to the most interesting study of *adaptations of the 'Our Father'*.

DIVINE WORLD	Our Father Who is in Heaven. Hallowed by thy Name. Thy Kingdom come.	Father Word Holy Ghost
INVO-EVOLUTION (Place)	Thy Will be done On Earth as in Heaven.	Passage from Divine to Moral
MORAL WORLD	Give us this day our Daily Bread.	Constant influence of Providence upon US
MAN	Forgive us our trespasses. As we forgive those who have trespassed against us.	Auto-creation of Our Future through Our Present
PHYSICAL WORLD	Keep us from Temptation And deliver us from Evil.	Destruction of EVIL by our covenant with God
SYNTHESIS	For Thou art Royalty, And Order, And Power In action through the Æons (generative cycles). <i>Amen.</i>	<i>Esoteric Part</i> ----- Key to Revelation ----- The Great Arcana.

ADAPTATIONS OF THE *OUR FATHER*

In the preceding study we had approached an analysis of the prayer of the Christ under two aspects.

1. The constitution of this prayer in itself.
2. The secret divisions and their purpose. We had held off *adaptations* of the '*Our Father*'.

In fact we hesitated for a long time before publishing the results of our research on this subject; for it appeared to us that our work would never be accomplished, seeing the grandeur of the model taken at the point of departure. But an important consideration now allows us to deliver our attempts to publication: this is the assurance that, if these attempts are imperfect, at least they indicate the path to those who, in consequence, would wish to follow variations which are as singular as they are interesting.

We would remind you that we determined the terms in the '*Our Father*' constituted a series of *laws* capable of being applied differently in the three worlds. Furthermore, we indicated that this excellent prayer gave the key to the Divine action in itself upon the moral and material world, and of the reaction of man upon the divine by means of the great law of *Forgiveness* with all its occult consequences.

Now, we are going to set aside all theoretical considerations and simply give the results of some adaptations of the terms *Father, Name, Kingdom, Will, Earth, Heaven, etc*, which constitute the general laws on which are established the aforementioned adaptations⁶.

Adaptation to the Ideal (Image of the Father in the Moral World)

Perfect Realizer
Who is
In my interior Heaven
May Thy Name be made manifest
Through being unveiled,
May Thine evolutionary influence
Be realized,
May Thy domain be spread throughout my body
As it is spread in my heart.
Manifest to me each day
Your certain presence.
Excuse my weaknesses
As I forgive those
Of feeble mortals, my Brothers,
Preserve me from the mirages of perverse matter,

⁶ My translations are loose – PV.

For Thou art Royalty	But deliver me from despair.
And Balance	in the eternity of my Intuition.
And Power.	

Adaptation to the Truth
(Image of the Father in the Intellectual World)

	Living Truth
	Who is
	In my immortal soul,
	May Thy Name be affirmed
	Through Work
	May Thy manifestation
	Be revealed,
	May <i>Thy law</i> come into matter
	As it have come into Spirit.
	Give us each day
	The Creative Idea,
	Forgive my ignorance
	As I forgive that
	Of the ignorant, my Brothers.
	Keep me from sterile Negation
	But deliver me from mortal doubt.
For Thou art the Principal ⁷	in the unity of my Reason.
And Balance	
And Rule.	

Adaptation to Suffering
(Paternal Principal of Redemption in the Material World)⁸

O Beneficent Suffering
Who art
In the Root of my incarnation
May Thy Name be blessed
By the courage of proof,
May Thy Influence
Be understood,
May Thy purifying fire consume by body
As it has consumed by soul.
Come each day to evolve

⁷ Could also be 'Principle' – implying both agent and person – PV.

⁸ Positive verses become negative in the material world, and vice versa.

My indolent nature, Come and destroy my laziness and my pride As you destroyed laziness and pride Of the sinners, my Brothers! Keep me form the cowardice which could Bring me to discard Thee, for Thou alone Can deliver me from the evil which I have created.	
For Thou art the Purifier And the Balancer And the Redemptor	in the rounds of my existences.

Kabbalistic Adaptation

Oh Yod Creator Who art In Ain-Soph May Kether Thy Word Be blessed, May Tiphareth, the splendor of Thy reign Shine forth its rays, May Yahweh Thy cyclical law Reign in Malkuth, As it reigns in Kether. Give to Neshamah each day The illumination of one of the 50 doors of Binah. Set the infinite Mercy of Chesed Against the <i>shells</i> which I create in my <i>Imago</i> When, misunderstanding on of the 32 ways of Chokmah, I emanate the rigor of Ruach Towards my Brothers. Keep Neshamah form the attractions of Nephesh and deliver us From Nahash.		
For Thou art Resh. The Tiphareth Principal. The creative Splendor of Yesod. The matrix.	or EL or YOD or MEM	in the Elohim.

... Well! Beings as powerful as this are very rare here below. I only knew one: Maître Philippe. He taught us to try to be good. He taught us tolerance towards all, and for the faults of others; the need to say nothing bad to anyone; to have an absolute confidence in the Father; pity for the suffering of others. Finally, he showed us that one may evolve only by partaking in the suffering of others, and *not by shutting oneself away in an ivory tower for fear of losing one's purity and wisdom.*

This is why we try to waken a little part of humanity, to spread around us some ideas which do not originate in our own minds, and to propagate the two great virtues which come to us from Heaven: kindness and tolerance.

⁹ Extract from «Traité élémentaire d'occultisme », 1976.